

REMARKS

In light of the above amendments and remarks to follow, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 and 9 are in this application. Claims 6-8 are canceled. Applicants reserve the right to continue prosecution of any or all of these canceled claims in one or more divisional applications.

Claims 1-5 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marshall et al. (U.S. 5,489,923) in view of Yamamoto et al. (U.S. 5,742,279), and further in view of Raviv et al. (U.S. 6,061,052).

Independent claim 1 recites in part as follows:

“wherein a logical product of a first pixel value in a current field and at least one of the following: (i) a second pixel value in one of an immediately preceding field; or (ii) a third pixel value in an immediately subsequent field is obtained, and wherein the **bright point is determined to exist only when said first pixel value and either said second pixel value or said third pixel value are on**”

In explaining the above 103 rejection, the Examiner asserted that Marshall and Yamamoto do not teach “a logical product of a first pixel value in a current field line and a second pixel value in one of an immediately preceding field and a third pixel value in an immediately subsequent field is obtained, and wherein the bright point is determined to exist only when both pixel values of adjacent field are on.” To overcome such deficiency, the Examiner relied on Figs. 11A-11B and col. 5, lines 12-22 of Raviv.

It is respectfully submitted that the portions of Raviv applied by the Examiner (hereinafter “Raviv”) do not teach the above recited feature of amended independent claim 1. That is, in Figure 11A, Raviv discloses patterns built of pairs of illuminated horizontal lines.

Each pair is separated by six horizontal lines which are illuminated according to a given binary code. Such patterns are merely used to determine the position of a bright point and not the existence. As such, this method does not account for situations where the blinking pattern of the bright point is out of sync with the period where an image is captured.

On the other hand, the image processing apparatus of amended claim 1 detects the existence of a bright point by comparing a pixel in a current field with a pixel in either a preceding field or subsequent field. When both of the pixels are on, then apparatus makes a determination that a bright point exists. Such method accounts for situations where the blinking pattern of the bright point is out of sync with the period where an image is captured.

Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 is believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Marshall, Yamamoto, and Raviv.

For reasons similar or somewhat similar to those regarding claim 1, amended independent claims 4, 5, and 9 are believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Marshall, Yamamoto, and Raviv.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, and due to such dependency, are believed to be distinguishable from the applied combination of Marshall, Yamamoto, and Raviv for at least the reasons previously described.

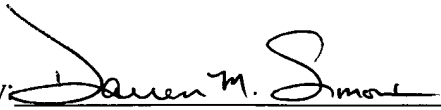
In the event that the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing comments concerning the disclosures in the cited prior art, it is requested that the Examiner indicate where in the reference or references, there is the bases for a contrary view.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable over the prior art, and early and favorable consideration thereof is solicited.

Please charge any fees incurred by reason of this response and not paid herewith
to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

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